

ELDERLY COMMISSION MEETING

REGULAR MEETING: January 26, 2009 at 5:00pm

East Windsor Town Hall Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes of January 26, 2009:

- I. Meeting called to order at 5:02pm, by Cathy Drouin, Co-Chairman.
- II. Attendance:
 - Present Members: Elizabeth Burns (Municipal Agent), Catherine Drouin (Co-Chairman), Deb Donovan, Trevor Bray, Madeleine Thompson
 - Absent Member: Claire Badstubner (Chairman)
 - Guests: Dale Nelson (Selectwoman), Margaret Hale (ITN Connecticut), Beverly Percoski (EW Housing Authority representative)
- III. Previous Minutes:
 - Regular Meeting 11/24/08:
MOTION to accept the minutes, as presented, by Ms. Donovan. **SECONDED** by Ms. Thompson. Ms. Drouin abstains from voting due to absence from 11/24/08 meeting. **ALL VOTING IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**
- IV. ITN Presentation:
 - Ms. Hale handed out ITN packet to members that included information on the transportation program, application for service and various handouts regarding the details of the program (funding, usage, etc)
 - Ms. Hale reviewed the program and who qualifies for the transportation services. Ms. Hale briefly reviewed the history of ITN and the start-up of the program locally – specifically in regards to the how the program came to fruition with the help of state representatives.
 - There have been 178 test rides that were all successful (August-December, 2008). “Ride Reason” handout in the packet shows where residents were driven to (i.e. hair dresser, foot clinic, bank, etc). There were 65-70 rides with volunteers so far this January.
 - Ms. Hale also reviewed the handout out (graph) in regards to ITN’s revenue over the next five years. Ms. Hale reminded the commission that ITN is a non-profit organization as she discussed the sources of revenue on the graph. There was a discussion on how revenue is being raised – including “Walk for Rides” scheduled for 5/24/09. Ms. Hale also reviewed the “Ride & Shop” program.
 - Ms. Hale commented that the program has developed a sense of independence for the people who use the program and that the adult children of the participants are benefiting as well. Most rides are during the day at this time and are generally 4-5 miles.
 - ITN will be issuing its first newsletter soon.
 - Mr. Bray asked how the driver benefits and how the driver is paid. Ms. Hale responded that besides the benefit of being a volunteer, the driver does get reimbursed \$0.40/mile. Drivers can choose to use their miles as a credit to their own account as opposed to being

reimbursed monetarily. Also, Ms. Hale reminded the commission that both the driver and ITN are insured. The drivers are paid from all income sources available (i.e. ride revenue, grant money, fundraising money).

Ms. Nelson asked if there were any other ways to “barter for services” – besides being a volunteer driver to accumulate miles, are there opportunities for seniors to do other volunteer work (i.e. office work) to accumulate miles? Ms. Hale responded that there is not at this time, but open to ideas.

Ms. Thompson asked if Medicare subsidizes. Ms. Hale responded that they do not.

Ms. Hale discussed other aspects of the program in regards to raising money. Ms. Hale discussed the food gift card resale program that ITN currently has in place. ITN purchases gift cards from Shaws/Star Market, Stop & Shop, Big Y at a discounted price, sells them at their full price to make a profit. Ms. Nelson asked how ITN promotes this program. Ms. Hale stated that it is word of mouth at this time – a friend telling a friend. Ms. Hale stated that ITN does not want to overburden anyone – if 100 people buy \$50 gift cards in one week, with the 5% discount (Shaws and Stop & Shop), ITN would raise \$13K in a year.

Ms. Percoski confirmed with Ms. Hale that volunteers are found through the media and citizens talking about the program.

Ms. Burns commends Ms. Hale’s success with ITN and its outreach with the program so far.

V. Cell Phones for Seniors:

Mr. Bray gathered information from 7 participants regarding use of the cell phones. Commission members were given copies of Mr. Bray’s 10 questions and the results. Mr. Bray asked the first six questions to participants of the program. Mr. Bray states that he feels he should approach more people at the next senior center social to get a better idea of how the program is working for the participants. Ms. Nelson questioned whether question #7 has to do with the use of the cell phone or the expectations of the user.

Ms. Nelson suggested that it is time for re-education. Ms. Donovan stated that a total of 19 phones have been distributed and instructions on how to use them have been reviewed with some individuals. Mr. Bray disputed the re-education aspect, stating that older people do not like change and do not want to learn anything else.

Ms. Donovan reminded the group that the participants come voluntarily and are told that the cell phone does not replace their home phone or a life-line button. People are not forced to participate.

A discussion followed regarding seniors’ expectations during an emergency or when they need help. Mr. Bray commented that many seniors feel that someone will be right there to help them – but not by having to use a phone. Also, he commented that seniors are very contented and although they may take the phones home, that is the extent of it.

Ms. Drouin responded that she has not gotten that impression. She expressed concern over those seniors who do not have phone chargers or do not keep them charged so that their phone is always ready for them.

Ms. Thompson commented that the elderly do not think about the fact that they may fall. They have the mindset that "it will not happen to me" and therefore, many may not think to carry their phones with them. Ms. Percoski commented that even young people do not always carry their phones and they could fall and need help as well.

Ms. Thompson recommended putting a sticker on the phone reminding the user how to dial 9-1-1 on their phone.

Ms. Donovan would like to follow-up with the 7 people that Mr. Bray spoke with and invite them to the next meeting to do a review. Ms. Donovan will meet Mr. Bray at the next senior center social to meet those individuals and do an "instant outreach". Ms. Donovan commented that we don't want the program to fail them because of rudimentary reasons. Ms. Thompson reiterated that constant re-enforcement is necessary.

Regarding the 12/4/08 (10:00am) program at the Senior Center – Ms. Donovan, Ms. Badstubner and Ms. Nelson all attended. Ms. Donovan reports that it was a very good session; however they were 1 phone short. Six people attended and the presentation and practice was about 45 minutes. Ms. Nelson commented that the small group was good in terms on one-on-one. She also stated that the time of the program seemed to work well. The next scheduled cell phone program is 4/2/09 (before lunch) at the Senior Center.

VI. Senior/Active Adult Survey:

No discussion. To be added to 2/23/09 agenda.

VII. Miscellaneous/New Business:

1. Ms. Drouin relayed to the commission that Ms. Badstubner will be submitting the budget for 2009-2010. She will be submitting a budget of \$650.00 which breaks down to \$600 for recording secretary and \$50 for postage. No discussion followed.
2. Ms. Drouin informed the commission, per Ms. Badstubner's request, that the May meeting falls on a holiday (Memorial Day). Ms. Drouin stated that with the limited budget for recording secretary, the commission may want to consider canceling that meeting. **MOTION** made by Ms. Thompson to cancel the May 25, 2009 meeting. **SECONDED BY** Ms. Donovan. **ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.** Memo will be sent to the Town Clerk for posting.
3. Ms. Burns passed along information she received from a resident who was inquiring about Dial-a-Ride services to Enfield Adult Day Care. There are currently 5 residents using the day care. Ms. Burns presented to the commission that there are approximately 2054 residents ages 50-64 and 1500 ages 65+. She states that at some point some of these residents will need adult day care services. The commission has been asked to review this issue again in the future – when federal money gets released to states and towns. Ms. Donovan asked for statistics on Dial-a-Ride. Mr. Bray commented that residents also now have ITN as an option to day care.

VIII. Adjournment:

MOTION made by Mr. Bray to adjourn meeting at 6:16pm. **SECONDED BY** Ms. Donovan.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Pellegrini